**Heller Near-Peer Mentorship Guide**

**What is Heller Near-Peer Mentorship Guide (HNPM)**

HNPM is a mentorship program that connects new coming students at Heller with their peers, current students and recent alumni for academic, professional, personal and social support that is relevant to their needs and culturally competent. This program comprises participants that are in almost the same level of seniority with different level of experiences at the Heller School.

Heller as a hub of a learning environment of diverse students from different parts of the world, socio-economic backgrounds and identities, the role of peers has an indispensable contribution to attain inclusive and positive learning experience that puts into account academic performance, overall wellbeing and the need of thriving community.

**Aims of HNPM**

* Promoting the inclusion of diverse identities, voices, and perspectives within the Heller Community
* Encouraging productive and effective experience of students during their time at Heller
* Fostering a sense of belongingness across the diverse members of Heller Community
* Prioritizing physiological, mental and psychological wellbeing of individuals and the community as a whole.
* Bridging the possible gap of incoming students with faculty and school/community resources.
* Enhancing students’ awareness of the existing resources and support centers within and outside Heller.

**Who is eligible to be a Mentor of HNPM**

* Current Heller Students (of all programs) and alumni who are interested and committed to providing peer to peer support.

**Channel of communication**

* In-person meetings according to the availability of both the mentor and the mentee.
* Remote meeting arrangements through Skype, Zoom or other platforms, if both parties feel safe to use it.

**Type of Mentorship**

* Academic support through sharing of experiences and resources.
* Support in finding practicums and internships.
* Channeling students to resources that support their academic achievement, mental health, and social wellbeing.
* Providing psychological and social support if the situations can be managed by the capacity of the mentor.

**Resources in supporting mentors**

* Training of trainers for volunteer mentors
* Continuous online resources
* Regular check-in meetings to share experiences and learned lessons

**A bridge between Mentors with Mentees**

* The matching process of mentees with their mentors needs to be according to the relevance of the support they need. It will be important to match mentees with mentors who understand their context academically, psychologically and socially. That is why the creation of a matching survey becomes a vital factor.
* For an inclusive service that meets the needs of all students from different academic programs, background, and social identities, the diversity of mentors based on these factors is vital.
* Thematic mentorship

**Code of conduct**

* Even though this mentorship scheme is a volunteer initiative, its success depends on the commitment and dedication of all parties.
* Take into account that the relationship between mentors and mentees is near-peer mentorship, hence mentors should be conscious of power-dynamics and always be recognizant that the mentees their peers in terms of academic and professional experience.
* In dealing with conflicts or any type of dispute, mentors should restrain themselves from dealing with the situation on their own. It is important to take a bystander position and channel the mentees to the resources that can help them in resolving the situation.
* Always remember that mentors are mandated reporters of title IX.